

**CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
CITY OF WATERTOWN  
June 13, 2011  
8:00 P.M.**

**MAYOR JEFFREY E. GRAHAM PRESIDING**

**PRESENT:**           **COUNCIL MEMBER ROXANNE M. BURNS  
COUNCIL MEMBER JOSEPH M. BUTLER JR.  
COUNCIL MEMBER TERESA R. MACALUSO  
COUNCIL MEMBER JEFFREY M. SMITH  
MAYOR GRAHAM**

**ALSO PRESENT:**   **MARY M. CORRIVEAU, CITY MANAGER  
CITY ATTORNEY ROBERT J. SLYE**

**City staff present: Elliott Nelson, Doug Osborn, Jim Mills, Gary Pilon, Gene Hayes**

**Destination Marketing Proposal for Fiscal Year 2011-12**

Gary DeYoung, Director of Tourism, TIITC, addressed the Council concerning this proposal which would cost \$34,550. The City would buy into the 2010-11 Summer Marketing Program as a Major Partner for \$8,750. The 1000 Island International Travel Guide Ad would be \$5,500. The City's share of the Seaway Trail Journey Magazine would be \$2,600 and the Pentagon Travel Shows cost would be \$1,700. The Military Visitor Supplement Underwriting would be \$2,000 and the remainder would be \$14,000 for the Watertown branded Eastern Ontario Marketing. Mr. DeYoung remarked that he would hope the City and the Town would look favorably upon the program and repeat last year's program. Supervisor Bartlett was present.

Mayor Graham remarked that the number of people coming over here is up based just on sales tax figures. He remarked that there will be a discussion this evening on city cave exploration as there is a group that wants to do this and, overtime, this could become a niche industry.

Council Member Smith thanked Mr. DeYoung for his efforts. He asked if TIITC works with Joe Rich on the upcoming concerts.

Mr. DeYoung explained that they just started a series of focus groups under Stage 1000. They published 25,000 copies of all entertainment in the Watertown, Clayton, Gananoque area.

Council concurred to continued participation.

**Discussion Items:**

**City Cave Exploration**

Mrs. Corriveau stated that some issues still need to be addressed.

Attorney Slye referred to the Assumption of Risk form which addresses the liability issues for the City.

Mayor Graham remarked that the big challenge would be to have a suitable gate on the opening.

Mr. Nelson remarked that there needs to be control over who has access to the caves. The Grotto has fabricated many gates to caves in the past. Referring to the cave at the Veterans' Memorial Riverwalk, Mr. Nelson explained that the cave was sealed in 1996 and in order to explore this cave, the cement barrier would need to be breached and a gate would have to be installed. He commented that the opening would be no larger than 3 x 3 and no costs were available at this time.

Mayor Graham asked if we knew if that cave was a portal to greater caves.

Mr. Nelson stated that they didn't know at this point.

Council Member Burns referred to the cave on Moulton Street and asked about the City owning it.

Mr. Nelson advised that while we own the other two, the City doesn't own the Moulton Street one. That is on Rail Star property.

Council Member Burns asked if we were giving the go ahead to explore it even if it isn't City property.

Mrs. Corriveau stated that we are not. It isn't City property.

Council Member Burns stated that it is mentioned in the report and questioned if the spelunkers are aware that it isn't the City's.

Attorney Slye advised that the only caves provided by the City for exploration will be the ones owned by the City.

Council Member Burns referred to the assumption of risk and wondered if there was merit in having a "hold the City harmless" clause.

Attorney Slye advised that the assumption of risk is based on the donkey basketball case that was in the courts. Participants acknowledge the risk and assume up to 100% of the risk.

### **Outdoor Skating Rinks**

Mrs. Corriveau referred to the report and asked members to clarify what the goal was to be.

Council Member Butler remarked that the entire Council is on board with this.

Council Member Smith commented that the bath house in the park had heat put in for the express purpose of having a warming facility for outdoor skaters. He referred to a firm which has matting systems for full size rinks which could be used 6 months out of the year for outdoor ice. If there is a thaw, the ice area still stays cold.

Council Member Burns remarked that when she included this in the goals, she was thinking the park. However, she is not opposed to looking at other locations such as J.B. Wise for example.

Mayor Graham suggested the fairgrounds could be considered as well.

Mr. Osborn stated that he needed a little more criteria such as why would you want an ice rink at the fairgrounds when you already have ice at the arena.

Mayor Graham explained that the indoor ice is not always available.

Mr. Osborn advised that he had looked into the type of rink that Council Member Smith had mentioned. They have the tendency to be a little costly and asked Council where in the park they would like to have the rink located.

Council Member Smith responded that it could go in front of the bath house at the pool. The skaters could use the bath house as a warming area. He also remarked that it isn't always necessary to buy a brand new rink as there might be used ones available.

Mr. Osborn asked how Council would like to see it maintained.

Mayor Graham remarked that Council would have to choose that option later.

Mrs. Corriveau asked if Council wanted skate rental available.

They responded that they didn't.

### **Veterans' Memorial Riverwalk**

Mayor Graham referred to the report and explained that it was in the agenda to remind Council of the previous debates on the issue.

### **Water and Sewer Rates**

Mayor Graham referred to the fact that the water rate ordinance is still on the table and therefore it probably isn't appropriate to debate it at this time.

Both Mrs. Corriveau and Attorney Slye advised that Council could talk about the proposal, but couldn't vote on the water ordinance as Council is still in the same meeting from when they

tabled the ordinance. Also, the local law concerning the sewer rates has a public hearing scheduled for Monday, June 20<sup>th</sup>. Therefore, it can't be acted upon either.

Mayor Graham advised that he had asked Mr. Mills to come up with Option 5 for discussion, even though he still supports Option 1. He commented that the argument that had been presented misses the point. It should be priced as a commodity. He stated that we put ourselves in bad situations when we focus in on a particular parcel or business enterprise.

Mrs. Corriveau remarked that under Option 5, a family of two and a family of four would see a rate increase in both water and sewer.

Mayor Graham responded that he understood that. However, a lot of different things could be done in working out the options. He advised that if next week's ordinance doesn't pass, the current structure stays in place.

Council Member Butler referred to the tourism pamphlets presented this evening and commented that we have an obligation to hotels and businesses and to increase their rates under Option 1 is bad economic policy. He stated that the business owners are not real excited about it and they do get upset about a 20% increase. He stated that the big users help keep the costs down for the residential users.

Mayor Graham remarked that he didn't eliminate the 4<sup>th</sup> tier – Council did.

Council Member Butler commented that he was sure that Mayor Graham had voted for it.

Mayor Graham responded that he hasn't gone out and stoked the fires and he hasn't received calls except from a person that Council Member Butler had told to call him.

Council Member Butler responded that he would abide by the result and move on. He stated that it won't affect his relationship with anyone on Council. He stated that he has a philosophical difference with it and it is a shame that Council doesn't get more interaction from residents. He stated that he would have business owners call everyone on the Council.

Council Member Smith remarked that he favored eliminating the tiered system. However, he does think that there is merit to what Council Member Butler is saying and that is why he is willing to look at the expansion of the 2<sup>nd</sup> tier and compressing the 3<sup>rd</sup> tier. He mentioned that he is willing to look at a slower version and he appreciated the fact that the Mayor put Option 5 out for discussion. However, he doesn't support that option.

Council Member Burns asked if Council Member Smith could get together with staff to come up with his suggestion for the next meeting.

Mayor Graham commented that he would like to have members have this done before the next meeting. If someone has a proposal, the ordinance currently on the table would have to be defeated next week.

Mrs. Corriveau asked Council where the 5 of them were on sewer rates. She stated that if Council wanted something to look at and discuss, staff needed to know.

Mayor Graham remarked that he hopes no one starts hyperbolizing about leaving the residential sewer rates the same but lowering the commercial by 18%. The fact is that the sewer rates are going down 18%.

Mayor Graham and Council Member Burns stated that they supported Option 1 for both water and sewer.

Council Member Macaluso and Council Member Smith stated that they support Option 1 for sewer.

### **Arena Roof**

Council Member Smith commented that the arena roof was supposed to have been repaired last year. However, it wasn't. Now there is more deterioration. He asked that Council be supplied with a report on it.

### **Cedar Street Complaints**

Mayor Graham advised that he had received complaints about Cedar Street still being used for truck traffic even though Breen Avenue has been completed. He asked if the Police Department could advise on not having the trucks on that street and diverting them over.

Council Member Burns remarked that she had received similar complaints.

### **Moody's Rating Upgrade**

Mrs. Corriveau advised Council that the City's bond rating was upgraded to Aa3.

Mr. Mills stated that it was a very high quality credit rating.

Council Member Butler commented that a double A rating is something to be very proud of.

### **Executive Session**

**MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS TO MOVE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS THE EMPLOYMENT HISTORY OF A PARTICULAR INDIVIDUAL. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER BUTLER AND CARRIED WITH ALL VOTING IN FAVOR THEREOF.**

Council moved into Executive Session at 8: 45 p.m.  
Work session ended.

Donna M. Dutton, City Clerk

